Karl Barth Society NEWSLETTER *Number 44 SPRING 2012*

Barth Society met in San Francisco November 18-19, 2011

Our meeting in **San Francisco** in conjunction with the **AAR** featured our usual Friday afternoon session from 4:00 P.M. to 6:30 P.M. and a Saturday morning session from 9:00 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. The presenters for the Friday afternoon session were **Matthew Puffer**, **University of Virginia**, whose lecture was entitled: "***Revisiting Karl Barth's Ethics of War***" and **Jessica DeCou**, **University of Chicago**, whose lecture was entitled: "'***Serious Questions' about 'True Words' in Culture: Against Dogmatics IV/3 as the Source for Barth's Theology of Culture***". **George Hunsinger**, **Princeton Theological** Seminary presided. The **Saturday morning** session was co-sponsored with the **Thomas F. Torrance Theological Fellowship**, and featured a ***Panel Discussion*** of **Paul D. Molnar's** book, ***Thomas F. Torrance: Theologian of the Trinity*** **(Ashgate, 2009)**. The panelists were: **Gary Deddo**, **InterVarsity Press**, **Chris Kettler**, **Friends University, Wichita, Kansas** and **Alan J. Torrance**, **University of St. Andrews**. **Paul D. Molnar**, **St. John's University, Queens, New York** responded. **George Hunsinger**, **Princeton Theological Seminary** presided.

The Seventh Annual Barth Conference **will be held at Princeton Theological Seminary June 17-20, 2012. This Conference is entitled: "Karl Barth's Trip to America: A Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of *Evangelical Theology*" and is co-sponsored by *The Center for Barth Studies* at *Princeton Theological Seminary* and the *Karl Barth Society of North America.***

For full Details and Registration, the Conference website is: http://www.ptsem.edu/barthconference

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What follows are summaries and some brief recaps of the lectures from the meeting in San Francisco.

"Revisiting Karl Barth's Ethics of War"

Matthew Puffer

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Puffer began by asking: what sort of "exception," if any, do Barth's provocative ethics of war entail? John Howard Yoder's conclusion voices a broad consensus: "[The *Grenzfall*] is simply the label Barth has seen fit to attach to that fact that, in some situations, he considers himself obliged to make a choice which runs against what all the formal concepts of his own ethics would seem to require." Yoder's expansive critique of this concept has significantly informed the reception of Barth's discussion of war, leading numerous scholars in Christian theology, moral philosophy, and biblical exegesis to view Barth's *Grenzfall* as a command that is an exception to the command of God elsewhere. According to Puffer, the error here is twofold. For Barth, the *Grenzfall* is neither a command nor an exception. Rather, it is a context or a circumstance, albeit an extraordinary or unusual one, in which obedience to the command of God *might* require killing. In his lecture, Puffer offered a reading of Barth's *Grenzfall* concept with these distinctions in mind and in conversation with three representative interpretations of Barth on war.

Borderline Situations and Exceptional Translations

In "Freedom for Life: The Protection of Life" (§55.2) Barth develops his concept of the *Grenzfall*: "the difficult problem of the exceptional case [*Grenzfall*] is the main theme of the present sub-section." The term *Grenzfall* appears eighty-one times in the *Church Dogmatics*, fifty-four of which occur in "Freedom for Life" (§55). It is commonly translated as "limit case," "extreme case," or "borderline case," and although these three translations are commonly used for the other twenty-seven occurrences throughout the *Church Dogmatics*, they are never used in "Freedom for Life." Instead, in the sub-section where Barth intentionally

develops the concept of the *Grenzfall*, its fifty-four occurrences are translated seven different ways. In twenty-six instances *Grenzfall* is translated as "exceptional case." More importantly, nineteen times *Grenzfall* is translated simply as "exception." These translations have proven incredibly misleading, resulting in countless pages in English scholarship attempting to discern what Barth means by such "exceptions" and "exceptional cases." Subsequent interpretations of Barth's "Freedom for Life" in *CD* III/4, and particularly the discussion of war, have borne the brunt of this translation oversight.

Barth's thwarted attempts to explain what the *Grenzfall* is not, serve to highlight the complications. Puffer says "thwarted" here, because when Barth uses the term *Ausnahme* to distinguish an exception from a borderline case [*Grenzfall*], both terms are translated as "exception." *Ausnahme*, the simple German word for "exception," is translated consistently—each of the eight times *Ausnahme* appears in *CD* III/4 it is translated "exception." Because *Grenzfall* is also translated as "exception" nineteen times, it is hardly surprising that where Barth attempts to explain that the *Grenzfall* is not an *Ausnahme*, confusion ensues. Where Barth indicates that the *Grenzfall* (translated as exception) is not an *Ausnahme* (also translated as exception), the translators fail to take notice and to adjust their numerous translations of *Grenzfall* accordingly, according to Puffer. As a result, Barth's distinctions between the *Grenzfall* and the *Ausnahme*, between the will to live and the respect for life in §55.1, and between the defense of life and the protection of life in §55.2 are almost completely lost in the English translation. Puffer believes that these distinctions merit closer attention.

The first sub-section of §55 introduces the concept of the *Grenzfall*. The *Grenzfall* describes the frontiers of the command of God without extending beyond the boundaries of this command. Puffer claimed that Barth cautions that if the command of God is misinterpreted as an absolute "will to live"—that is, as a principle or rule that life must never be surrendered—one will inevitably misapprehend some commanded actions within borderline cases as "a relaxation of the command or exception [*Ausnahme*] to the rule." The command of God, even in the unusual territory of the *Grenzfall*, is neither an exception to a rule nor a trumping of the divine command given elsewhere. Only when one misinterprets the respect for life as a principled or divinely commanded "will to live," does one wrongly understand the borderline case as a relaxation of God's command or as an exception.

According to Puffer, the *Grenzfall* is not an *Ausnahme*, the "borderline case" is not an "exception." Rather, it is an outer limit or fringe, much like the four-inch stripes of paint that mark off the sidelines and end lines around the perimeter of a soccer field. In soccer, a ball is not out of bounds until the entire ball crosses completely over this limit. As long as any portion of the ball remains on top of the line, it remains in play. It is obviously much easier for a ball to roll out of bounds when part of it is on the sideline—in such an exceptional or borderline portion of the field—but it is just as legitimately *in* the field of play. Killing in correspondence with the command of God within the *Grenzfall*, by this analogy, involves attentive and discerning footwork as one dribbles the ball directly atop the sideline, remaining in bounds. For Barth, murder is by definition out of bounds and obedience to the command of God always takes place in bounds.

The borderline case is between the normal case in which the commanded protection of life does not allow for killing and the prohibited space that is out of bounds. In Barth's terminology, the "defense of life" is the command that one receives within the vast majority of the playing field. The space in which God commands the "protection of life" includes both the usual "defense of life" where war is never God's command, as well as the unusual borderline space, where it is possible that God's command might require war. In short, the *Grenzfall* is neither beyond the geography of God's command nor within the context of the *usual* protection of life. The command given within the *Grenzfall* is neither an exception to the prohibition of murder (murder remains prohibited or out of bounds) nor an exception to the commanded protection of life. The command may take an *unusual* form of the protection of life, to be sure, but the *Grenzfall* is not an exception to the space in which God commands the protection of life.

Barth's second important distinction, Puffer noted, is between the borderline situation and the command of God in such a situation, and may be illustrated with an analogy to American football. Using the example of an unlikely sixty-three yard field goal attempt on first down Puffer noted that the *Grenzfall* would be the realm of possible situations that might give rise to such a command, or such a play-call, coming from the coach. The coach rarely calls this particular play on first down, but there may come a time at the end of a half when the team is down by two with eight seconds on the clock, a good kicker is available, the wind is at the back of the offense, and the quarterback has a weak arm. In such an unusual or borderline case, the play called for might be a field goal. The important distinction here is that the *Grenzfall* itself does not entail this command. In such an unusual circumstance, the command might take an unusual form, and if so the players on the field must yet discern and actualize the play called for. In running the play the coach calls for, they evidence their hope in the coach's good will and wisdom.

Barth applies both of these distinctions—between usual and borderline cases, and between borderline cases and God's command—to each of the six types of killing in

the sub-section on the "Protection of Life." These forms of killing, each of which is almost exclusively disobedient to the command of God, are murder when they oppose this command. Barth's *Grenzfall* is precisely the strange yet possible situation where the command to protect life might entail killing. It is a necessary but insufficient condition according to which killing may not be murder. The only sufficient condition, the command of God itself, must be no less discerned in the borderline case than in the unexceptional arena of life.

Puffer believes that nowhere is Barth's thinking on this matter so striking and perhaps so personal than in the excursus on tyrannicide. Barth recalls the assassination attempts upon Hitler and the involvement of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. If ever there were a situation in which the command of God to take a human life might come, Barth suggests this was such a case. Each failed attempt did not evidence that the command did not come but the conspirators' reluctance to act with complete disregard for their own lives—a failure to hear and properly respond to the command. Although "they had no clear and categorical command from God to do it [assassinnation]. . . . *In such a situation it might well have been the command of God.* For all we know, perhaps it was, and they failed to hear it." Barth had spoken with Bonhoeffer about this personally, yet he is uncertain as to whether the command of God to commit tyrannicide actually came. Even in the borderline case, the command of God cannot be presumed upon as a rule. There can be no simple identification of the borderline case with God's command. For Barth, neither circumstances in themselves, nor even the thickest descriptions of these circumstances reveal the command of God. Failures to attend to the distinction between the borderline case and God's command both derive from and contribute to confusion about the *Grenzfall* and supposed exceptions.

Again, at the end of Barth's familiar discussion of war, he takes up the borderline case in which a nation might attack another such that "its very existence and autonomy are menaced and attacked." Even in the case of the self-preservation of a state, Barth argues that war would not necessarily be commanded. He cites two scriptural instances when, according to Isaiah and Jeremiah, the command of God differed to the threatened nation of Israel. On one occasion the command of God was to resist while on the other it was to surrender. As in Barth's considerations of self-defense and tyrannicide, surrender is a live option for nations when attacked. Within the borderline case, the possibility of surrender must be considered alongside the possibility of waging war—either may be the command of God.

Three Interpretations of Barth on War

Puffer continued by noting that there exist at least three divergent streams in which Barth's brief statements on war are construed: rule-based, casuistic, and a weighing of presumptions and reasons.

Those who take particular notice of the notion of "command" in Barth's ethics may arrive at the conclusion that Barth's ethics are predominantly rule-based. For example, Richard Hays finds in Barth "an emphasis on the *rules* in the Bible as directly normative." Here, the repetitive translation of *Grenzfall* as "exception" muddies Barth's distinction between God's command and borderline cases, leading to the conclusion that "God is always free to decree particular exceptions to the rules." That is, God occasionally commands exceptions to otherwise normative rules. Within this rule/exception scheme, Barth's exhortations to prayer and exegesis provide the necessary means of discernment for such exceptions, since "the command of God can in specific cases overrule the explicit teaching of the Bible."

According to Barth, Scripture does not present a set of normative rules or "commands of God" for people to follow. Rather, individuals continually encounter the singular "command of God" in diverse situations through a manifold of relationships—to God, themselves and others, and the rest of creation: "As there is only one God, there is only one command of God." Barth's divine command theory does not consist of a series of rules, but rather the fulfillment of the one command of God in the singular history of Jesus Christ. The command of God does not come to the individual as a collection of individual commands, but as a singular command repeatedly encountered.

According to Puffer, John Howard Yoder offers an alternative take on Barth, with his view that Barth's primary motivation for introducing the borderline case is to secure God's sovereign freedom—God is free to command as God sees fit, even when God has already commanded otherwise in the past. Yoder rightly finds problematic what he wrongly takes Barth to be saying: "[The *Grenzfall*] takes the form of the general rule that there must be an exception to every rule." This self-contradiction derives from Barth's desire to affirm God's freedom in commanding. "To give body to the idea that God 'could' address to us an exceptional word . . . each case is defined in a casuistic way. *Cas*-uistics is nothing but the study of cases and even the vocabulary of Barth ("limiting *case*") demonstrates that it is not possible to speak of ethics without cases." Thus, Barth is not a deontologist but a casuist.

Yoder's reading is shaped significantly by the notion of freedom with which he works. For Barth, God's freedom does not consist in the ability to act in any number of possible ways or in self-contradiction, but the ability to act in the precise manner God continually elects to act, which is to say, as God has elected to act toward humanity from eternity. God is free to command as God

sees fit, yet this free command is always one and the same, as its material content is the person and work of Jesus Christ. Yoder's voluntarist interpretation of Barth's conception of freedom results in the self-refuting rule that there is an exception to every rule. He therefore interprets Barth's *Grenzfall* as an innovation that ensures God's freedom to act in self-contradictory ways. Yoder's reading, which serves as a major source of later receptions, results from this notion of freedom and a misconstrual of Barth's *Grenzfall/Ausnahme* distinction.

Interestingly, when Barth writes that he would consider an attack on Switzerland to be a borderline case, among all of Barth's interpreters, it is Yoder who asserts the importance of a distinction between the command of God and the borderline case. Others take this excursus to mean that Barth presumes to know in advance that God would command war to protect his homeland. Yoder helps us to see that the text says no such thing. Yoder confirms this interpretation when he shares that in a conversation Barth explicated what his text leaves implicit—namely, that even in the borderline case of an attack upon Switzerland, the command to wage war could not be known in advance. Interpretations that read into the text an advance affirmation of God's command to wage war do so under the assumption that a borderline case entails the unusual command to kill. In short, disaggregating the unusual command from the borderline case is necessary for a proper appreciation of Barth's ethics of war.

A third engagement with Barth works within a framework of presumptions for and against certain actions and an attendant weighing of reasons. John Bowlin and Bill Werpehowski engage in dialogue over such an appropriation of Barth's insights, specifically in relation to just war and "Catholic peacebuilding" efforts. Werpehowski suggests that "the circumstances within which one may hear a divine command to wage war include that there be a strong presumption against it," a claim resonant with statements made by U.S. Catholic bishops in *The Challenge of Peace.* Bowlin is less certain about Barth's presumptions and suggests they do not necessarily point to Werpehowski's conclusion. Bowlin questions the logical consistency of Barth's prohibition of murder, presumption against killing, and enigmatic "exceptional case." He wonders whether the "exceptions" of which Barth speaks should be understood to apply to the prohibition of murder or to a presumption against killing. Reflecting on seemingly contradictory statements by Barth, Bowlin concludes, "Apparently it is both."

Within a binary framework of presumptions—either for or against an act—Barth's description of the *Grenzfall* presents a logical contradiction. Within Barth's framework, the *Grenzfall* serves precisely as the situation where "exceptions" to the two usual possibilities are both logically possible. As the above discussion details, the *Grenzfall* is the marginal area between the usual protection of life and killing that is murder. Recognizing this liminal space requires decoupling the borderline case from the command given in that case. Furthermore, this dual-exception means that one cannot rely on either the presumption or the prohibition in discerning what action is commanded in the *Grenzfall.*

If one wants to push the language of presumption upon Barth, then the fact that he sees most killing as murder would place him in the camp of a presumption against killing. However, there is equally a presumption that actions that correspond to the command of God call for the defense of life—the protection of life rarely takes "the strange form of its conclusion and termination." Thus, both presumptions—protecting life does not entail killing, and killing is murder—are equally appropriate presumptions in Barth's ethics. For Barth, however, the borderline case presents an occasion in which neither of these presumptions prove useful starting points for discerning the command of God regarding killing. This space only opens up, however, once one no longer defines the *Grenzfall* as an exception to a rule or an exceptional command, but instead as an exceptional circumstance—a marginal space beyond the usual protection of life and within the limits beyond which killing is murder.

Clearly, according to Puffer, Barth's ethics of war are read in such different veins that they cannot be appreciated simply by listing the divergent charges. Some of the disparate interpretations derive from the discussion of war in III/4 and the "exceptional" translations, while others are related to the broader landscape of Barth's ethical project. His conception of divine command incorporates themes found in most deontological and casuistic ethics, but is not finally identical with either of these approaches. Barth is capable of redeploying their ethical vocabularies, just as he has room for presumptions and prohibitions. Whatever the similarities, however, even when they resulted in the same determination, Barth found it necessary to differentiate the approaches, lest his method be confused for others that could legitimate wars he viewed as disobedient to God's command. For example, in an April 1941 public letter Barth challenges the moral justification upon which Britain's leadership claims to prosecute the war against Nazi Germany, and shares with them his own rationale: "The ultimate reason which I put forward for the necessity of resisting Hitler [is] simply the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Ultimately, along with his own conclusions about actions in accordance with the command, Barth leaves his readers with the exhortation to prayerful exegesis, theological descriptions of Jesus' person and work, and the good human action of Jesus Christ as the alien

righteousness of God. Barth imagines that individuals truly do encounter this God, in anticipation and remembrance, here and now. The lack of apparent methodology in Barth's theological ethics coincides remarkably, perhaps even precisely, with the gift and the task of understanding the person and work of Jesus Christ to whom Barth envisioned these ethics bearing witness.

[A full version of this paper will appear in ***Modern Theology*** (28:3) in July, 2012]

"'Serious' Questions about 'True Words' in Culture"

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DeCou began by claiming that Barth is too often overlooked as a resource for contemporary work in theology of culture in part because scholars have yet to fully account for the approach that enabled him to engage freely and gladly with secular culture. In their efforts to articulate this approach, interpreters have typically turned to the first paragraph in *CD* IV/3 §69. Here, Barth explores the possibility of "true words" in secular culture, as well as the existence of "created lights" in the natural world that (if rightly understood) point to "primal revelation" (if rightly defined). After briefly mapping out this subsection, she argued that the relationship with which Barth is concerned throughout these passages is not that between Word and culture or church and culture, but between Word and words. Barth seeks to maintain a clear and stark distinction between all human words and the one Word of God. His point is that the church must not confuse its own words or the words of culture with the Word, but at the same time it is obligated to hear and obey this Word from wherever it calls. Indeed, throughout this section, the emphasis is placed, never on culture, but squarely on the Word: the freedom of the Word to speak through human words and the authority of the Word over the church. DeCou maintained, therefore, that the material in paragraph §69 was never intended to serve as a basis for the everyday, practical engagement of the theologian with cultural forms, but is more accurately understood as a necessary extension of his doctrine of the Word, indicated by his frequent reminders that "our thesis is simply that the capacity of Jesus Christ to create these human witnesses is not restricted to His working on and in prophets and apostles." Even in acknowledging the possibility of true words arising from secular culture, then, "we do not leave the sure ground of Christology."

Given Barth's famous resistance to the idea of theology of culture in the first volume of the *Dogmatics*, DeCou argued that Barth's positive assessment of culture's potential in *CD* IV/3 and his negative statements in *CD* I/1 are essentially the same in both content and context. Barth's first remarks on theology of culture in the *Dogmatics* appear amidst his discussion of the task of dogmatic theology in relation to the commission of the church. The church is called to proclamation, and dogmatic theology must test that proclamation against the criterion of the Word witnessed in scripture. The Word is not identical with scripture and cannot be claimed as a possession of the church. Indeed, in principle, all human talk could and should be talk about God. But it is here that Barth rejects theology of culture if this means investigating human words on the basis of divine freedom apart from God's revealed command. What God *can* do and what God *has* done are two very different questions. That God in his freedom and power *can* speak through any medium does not alter the specific command laid upon the church. For Barth, if we wish to engage culture theologically in terms of its potential as a locus for the Word, we must begin with the knowledge of that Word through scripture. Returning to the more positive remarks in *CD* IV/3, Barth addresses culture in the context of introducing the work of Christ as prophet. The Word is *the* Light, the ultimate truth, in relation to which all other words, lights, and truths are distorted and relative. The responsibility of the church is to proclaim the revelation of reconciliation to the world. In doing so, it must recognize the freedom of the Word to make use of human words in scripture and the church. Only after establishing this does he move on to the "more complicated question" of the Word communicating through secular cultural words, the actualization of which the church must recognize not only as a possibility but as a reality. It can do so only because it has its starting point with the Word. If true words are found, their significance for the community must be limited by the recognition that they lack the authority and universality of the self-revelation of God witnessed in scripture, thus distinguishing his position from that of natural theology. In sum, DeCou claimed, Barth's *negative* remarks in I/1 and his more *positive* remarks in IV/3 are situated in the context of 1) affirming the universal providence of God, 2) asserting the freedom and authority of the Word, 3) explicating the relationship between the Word of God, the human words of scripture, and the human words within and outside of the church, 4) emphasizing the central importance of the Word as the ultimate criterion for all other words, and 5) thereby clarifying the responsibility and task of the church in relation to Word and words. Thus, paragraph §69 can be viewed simply as a twenty-fold multiplication of the five or so pages found in paragraph §3.

DeCou then turned to interpreters of Barth's theology of culture who have turned to IV/3 in their efforts to articulate more fully his approach. For example, Robert Palma draws out Barth's theology of culture in terms of "free theology" and "free culture," which he sees as

offering an approach that refuses to impose alien concepts on cultural words. She argued, however, a theology that explores culture for the sake of uncovering "free communications" of Christ would seem to jeopardize the freedom and autonomy of both theology and culture. Any theology that excavates culture for "free communications" of the Word would be tempted to view secular culture and its products in terms of an innately revelatory, theonomous culture that, as Tillich would have it, "communicates... something ultimate in being and meaning, in all its creations," suggesting that there are answers in culture even if these must be always tested against the answers given in scripture. To offer such answers is not the task of secular culture, and to view it in this way is to ask secular culture to fulfill theology's task, thus restricting its freedom to be a genuinely secular human culture. The true words approach, she claimed, could therefore lead to a theology of culture in which both church and culture become responsible for proclaiming the Word, resulting in a procedure that turns to culture for divine truth—culture as a *source* of revelation! And this would imply that the value of secular culture depends on its capacity to contribute to the task of theology when, in fact, Barth argues the opposite: the value of theology is wholly dependent on its capacity to contribute to the task of culture by bearing witness to the Word through whom this task is given. Though she agreed with Palma's claim that Barth grew to take culture "less seriously but also more seriously," allowing a greater freedom for secular culture, such that it could be appreciated on its own terms, her point was simply that this ought not to be attributed to the work of paragraph §69 but rather to Barth's eschatological emphasis on freedom, joy, and play.

Toward this end, DeCou then turned to the Mozart essays, which are the most frequently cited example of Barth's application of the "true words" model because of his famous statement in the fourth essay on "Mozart's Freedom": "How can I as an evangelical Christian and theologian proclaim Mozart? May I ask all those others who may be shaking their heads in astonishment and anxiety to be content for the moment with the general reminder that the New Testament speaks not only of the kingdom of heaven but also of *parables* of the kingdom of heaven?" Many interpret this remark as a concrete example of a "secular parable," which Barth refused to offer in the context of paragraph §69 itself (written only three years later). Geoff Thompson has argued that while paragraph §69 uses *Gleichnis* and Gospel interchangeably, the Mozart essays distinguish between the two terms, though John McDowell questions why Barth would use such a key term "in such a contrary way in a short time period." However, Palma hints at the possibility of this dual understanding when he points to a radio interview in which Barth hesitates to describe Mozart as "charismatic." Palma then states that "if Barth could not say that Mozart's music was a parable of God's grace in that it was charismatic, he did hear the echo of God's grace in the very form and freedom of Mozart's musical expression." The distinction may be subtle, but DeCou suggested that it makes a great deal of difference when attempting to articulate and apply Barth's theology of culture. Moreover, she noted that there is an important point to be made concerning context. While Barth does make some provocative statements, we might consider the circumstances in which these essays were composed. Not only is their purpose non-theological, but they were written as specially commissioned tributes. According to DeCou, whatever we wish to make of Barth's theology of culture, we must permit him a bit of hyperbole in composing tributes to his lifelong hero. (In contrast, Barth's praise of Mozart in his theological writings lacks such hyperbole, depicting Mozart simply as a gifted artist whose talent is enhanced by a profoundly eschatological, but also profoundly human, sensibility.) Philip Stoltzfus observes that, "in placing his expressions into the realm of indirect speech—the hypothetical, imaginative, quotational—he acts to distance himself and his audience from their claims," made clear by the fact that he often "teases his audience into objectifying, qualifying, and ultimately relativizing what has just been asserted." Throughout the Mozart essays, Barth's exaggerated rhetoric is tongue-in-cheek and is intended to be taken as such. Therefore, she argued that those who seek to establish the Mozart essays as Barth's definitive application of the true words approach (turning Mozart into an instance of Christ's free communications that the church is then bound to hear and apply) are simply taking them too seriously—applying an excessively serious approach to deliberately lighthearted texts.

However, if we still wish to take these essays as examples of Barth's theology of culture *par excellence,* it is not necessary to focus on his hyperbole in the hopes of applying it rigidly or dogmatically to his statements in paragraph §69 (where, significantly, he chooses *not* to mention Mozart). Instead, if "our daily bread must also include playing," then just as Mozart plays, Barth also plays—with theological language, with Mozart, and with his audience. Mozart is not a teacher but a man "who plays simply" and, similarly in these tributes to Mozart, Barth does not aim to teach but to "play simply." The freedom and joy that Barth finds in Mozart's music resembles the freedom and joy he sought for theology, which had become full of "sulky faces, morose thoughts and boring ways of speaking." To understand Barth's playful and free theology of culture, then, we must turn to the doctrine of redemption and the concept of eschatological play. While Barth was seldom comfortable discussing culture and the arts in the context of dogmatic theology, he has much more to say on the subject under the heading of eschatology, for it is here that all human activity can be recognized as a "game" that "can never be ultimately serious, and never is." Indeed, he remarked that he had "always believed that

the problem of art or the arts must be dealt with in connection with the eschatological apocalypse," joking that this was reason enough not to write the fifth volume. And, as a frequent moviegoer, he even wondered where the "immortal Marlene Dietrich… will have a mention in the *Dogmatics*—perhaps in eschatology because she is such a borderline case?" For Barth, the promise of redemption is our source of hope and must be met with gratitude and freely given obedience. Aware of the promise of future redemption, we are finally able to recognize the present reality as provisional, as something to which we cannot ascribe ultimate seriousness, for God's work alone is truly serious. This realization means that "our conduct bears the mark of good… when it is not done in earnest but in play." In this context, he is able to discuss the theological import of art, not as a locus for true words, but as theologically worthwhile in itself. Art shines as a worthy achievement in its own right simply by fulfilling its native "secular" function as a specific, concrete enactment "of the playful character of human action." As such, artistic expression "does not come within the sphere of our work as creatures or our work as sinners saved by grace. As pure play it relates to redemption."

Because of its emphasis on provisionality and play and its understanding of all human activity as a game, DeCou concluded that Barth's eschatology allows for a theology of culture that takes the human work of neither theology nor culture too seriously in light of the ultimate seriousness of divine work, thus enabling theology and culture to encounter one another freely and gladly while still avoiding the deification of human achievements and safeguarding the freedom and authority of the Word. This approach provides an interpretive lens through which to better understand Barth's analyses of particular cultural forms, and also provides a model through which the theologian of culture can appreciate culture's value and respect its secular self-understanding *without* deifying cultural achievement. It therefore articulates a theology of culture that is in some ways more amenable to secular culture than the more popular Tillichian approaches, thus revealing the significance of Barth's theology for contemporary work in theology of culture.

Book Review

The Witness of God: The Trinity, Missio Dei, *Karl Barth, and the Nature of Christian Community.* By **John G. Flett**. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010. Pp. vii + 328. $36.00 Paperback.

In this wide-ranging and scholarly work, John G. Flett offers a detailed historical study of the problem of mission in twentieth century theology and a constructive proposal based on the often-neglected role of mission in the theology of Karl Barth. The book's central contention is that mission has been pushed to the periphery of Christian theology because of a gap that has opened up between the being and action of God. Since God's being is often regarded in abstract isolation from whom God reveals himself to be in the economy of grace, Flett argues the Church has also been understood in abstract and essentialist terms that make mission secondary to its nature. Essentially, for Flett, the problem of mission is a problem of God. If God is understood to exist apart from the economy, then the Church is understood similarly apart from its mission. This book seeks to restore mission to a central place in Christian theology, indeed as an essential attribute of the doctrine of God.

The book is divided into two major sections. In the first section, Flett offers a careful analysis of the *missio Dei* movement in the twentieth century in order to show that although Karl Barth is often credited with having inspired a Trinitarian grounding to twentieth century missiology, Barth actually had very little influence on the movement. Through a painstaking study of many of the movement's major voices, Flett shows that most *missio Dei* theology was an attempt to avoid any association with colonialism on the grounds of a general Trinitarian framework. Although *missio Dei* theology often claimed to be Trinitarian, Flett shows that it was more often an attempt to orient the Church towards the Kingdom of God, to promote the shalom of all peoples, and to distance mission from any of its cultural or propagandistic undercurrents. With chapters on *missio Dei* theology, German missions and dialectical theology, and the Willengen conference on missions in 1952, the first half of this book offers an important study on the history of the theology of missions. Scholars interested in *missio Dei* theology will certainly welcome this valuable contribution.

The second half of the book explores Barth's little-known contribution to the theology of mission. Here, Flett argues at length that the problem of mission derives from a gap that is allegedly opened up between God's being and act. According to Flett, this gap is reflected in the secondary status of mission in most traditional and contemporary theologies. Drawing on Barth's later Christology, as well as earlier passages in the *CD*, Flett draws out important and overlooked statements that are obscured by the English translation of the *CD* to demonstrate that for Barth mission belongs to the essential nature of the Church. Just as God determines to live God's own life in the economy of salvation, and not in abstract isolation within himself, so too must the Church also exist in its missionary activity and not merely for itself. For Flett, Barth's dynamic Trinitarian theology includes God's self-determination to live God's life in becoming human in Jesus Christ for fellowship with humanity, so that the gap between God and human beings is bridged in the very being of God himself.

There is no doubt that this book offers a serious scholarly attempt to reconstruct a theology of mission on the basis of close relationship between the being and act of God. However, Flett's repeated reference to the gap between God's being and act calls for greater clarity regarding the distinction between the immanent and economic Trinity. Although Flett admits the importance of this traditional distinction, his discussion does not explore the role it plays in Barth's theology of the Trinity or mission. Indeed, while there are some insightful sections on the role of the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Christian community, especially concerning the active participation of human service in the divine work, there is no corresponding section on the Father or on the processions of the immanent Trinity. As a result, Flett seems concerned only with actions of God *ad extra*. He even claims "God's movement into the economy belongs to his being from all eternity. It is not alongside who God is; rather, it is the very plentitude of God's own life that is capable of including the human in such a way that this inclusion is God's own self-realization" (p. 208). One wonders, however, if this view can be squared with Barth's traditional affirmation of the freedom and love of God. As Flett repeats throughout the book, "God is perfect and complete in himself in such a way that his becoming in the economy belongs to his being from all eternity" (p. 33). More attention to the traditional distinction between the divine processions and missions would be necessary to defend and clarify the provocative thesis that God is missionary by nature.

Nonetheless, the book's central argument for a close connection between divine ontology and economy in the theology of mission remains a vital contribution for understanding the nature of the Church. While the *missio Dei* cannot be collapsed into the mission of the Church, for God's action is not identical with human agency, it remains the case that the Church is called, upheld, and sent out into the world, such that mission remains key to its apostolic identity. Flett, therefore, is correct to conclude that the Church cannot exist in "holy isolation" that seeks the *beneficia Christi* only for itself, for God himself does not wish to remain enclosed within his own dynamic being. Any Church that is "*incurvatus in se*" (p. 232) cannot be the Church of Jesus Christ. Because God is who he is in himself as he is in relation to the world, Flett concludes, "the community cannot live in fellowship with him without standing at the side of those in affliction" (p. 272). Mission, therefore, is essential to the ecclesial life of the Christian. "To serve God," he states, "is to live in service to the world" (p. 273), for "the community is not an end in herself" (p. 293). Yet at the same time, it should be emphasized that while mission is essential to the being of the Church, the Church is not "constituted" by her work or mission, as Flett sometimes says (p. 266) in his effort to avoid any abstract ecclesiology, just as God is not constituted by his work *ad extra*. Rather, the Church is constituted by the grace of God who is perfect and complete in himself and cannot be reduced to his work in the world, but has determined to live his life from all eternity in Jesus Christ for the sake of the world. Thus, as grounded in the being and action of God, the Church is enabled to exist in its own corresponding freedom to cooperate in God's mission for the salvation of the world, so that it cannot possibly be understood apart from its active service in and for the world.

This book is a creative and provocative exploration into the theology of mission that engages some of the most exciting issues in theology today. Although it is a densely written work that sometimes lacks clear summaries, it may reward close attention by those interested in the theology of church and mission. Unfortunately, while the book admirably seeks to ground mission in the doctrine of God, its lack of a robust theology of the Trinity raises some important questions about the distinction between the processions and missions of the triune being of God. Furthermore, its highly academic style may place it out of the reach of most non-academic audiences, as does the fact that it offers very little by way of practical suggestion for those engaging in contemporary missionary work. Nonetheless, the work makes an important and engaging contribution to the understanding of Karl Barth's theology of mission and deserves close attention from specialists in the field.

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At the Saturday morning session **Paul Molnar** offered some opening remarks about his book, ***Thomas F. Torrance: Theologian of the Trinity***. This was followed by three presentations along with a response to each by Paul Molnar and an open and lively question and answer session. A brief summary of some of the material offered at the session is presented here. Much of this discussion will appear in a forthcoming issue of ***Cultural Encounters*** and also will be available online at ***Grace Communion International***; hence Molnar's responses to the presentations will not be printed here.

"Comments on *Thomas F. Torrance: Theologian of the Trinity*"

Gary Deddo, InterVarsity Press

Gary Deddo began by recommending Molnar's book as an excellent introduction to Torrance's theology and as "one of the best deals offered by Ashgate". He then presented what he considered to be the major achievements of the book.

First, Deddo spoke about the book's *comprehensiveness* noting that mastering Torrance's thought requires wide reading across his extensive corpus. In this regard Deddo said that Molnar has done a great service in synthesizing material from non-contiguous sources and presenting readers with a comprehensive grasp of the whole of Torrance's theology. That, he said, was no small task and would help interpreters of Torrance, who don't have access to all of his works, to "avoid making hasty conclusions about what he meant based on their partial readings". Molnar's book was comprehensive in another sense as well. It begins with a chapter on the doctrine of the Trinity and implications for theological method, and then moves through chapters on God the Father and Creation, Jesus Christ, the Atonement, Pneumatology, the Resurrection and Ascension, and a final chapter on the Church, its sacraments and ministry. Deddo noted that while Torrance did not publish a systematic theology, Molnar offers a faithful and comprehensive guide to what such a theology might have looked like by arranging the dogmatic topics as he did. In Deddo's estimation "What comes through is the remarkable coherence, the ecumenical scope, the biblical depth and the evangelical conviction of Torrance's thought". In that sense this book is a great service for those who want a "dogmatically comprehensive grasp of Torrance's work". But Deddo also noted that he did not want to leave the impression that the book merely offered generalizations about Torrance's thought. On the contrary, he claimed that Molnar contextualized his thinking while demonstrating an awareness of objections to Torrance's theology; at the same time Molnar offered incisive explanations that will help beginners and seasoned theologians to see the depth and meaning of Torrance's positions, especially when Torrance was questioning prevailing viewpoints.

Second, Deddo spoke about Torrance's rejection of the container view or receptacle view of space. In sum, Deddo noted that adopting a container view negatively affects one's view of the God-world relation, the intra-Trinitarian relations, the hypostatic union as well as the sacraments. He claimed that Molnar's discussion shows just how crucial this issue is and that few have recognized the pervasive influence and theological significance Torrance gives this issue as Molnar has. Other important issues that Molnar helpfully discussed included the ideas of *theosis* or *theopoiesis* which Molnar captured nicely by showing that while there is no confusion of humanity and divinity in Christ, we are, through the Spirit united with Christ and thus with the Father through graciously sharing in Christ's own regenerated humanity.

On another note, Deddo maintained that Molnar's book was helpful in showing the critical implications of Torrance's thought by comparing and contrasting his positive views with those of others such as Moltmann, Ted Peters, Paul Tillich, Bultmann, J. A. T. Robinson, Schillebeeckx, Blondel, Maréchal and Rahner. By showing how Torrance's theology stresses Christ's continuing high priestly mediation through the Spirit Molnar opens up constructive dogmatic alternatives often absent from contemporary debates on a host of issues, not the least of which is the relationship of the immanent and economic Trinity.

Finally, Deddo noted that in the last chapter of the book, Molnar briefly touched on some criticisms of Torrance's theology. He noted that in the fifty pages devoted to this concern, Molnar addressed some sixteen or so areas of Torrance's thought that have been seriously questioned by theologians such as Colin Gunton, Daniel Hardy, James Barr and Richard Muller. Molnar is forthright about objections made to Torrance's views on the historical and anthropological aspects of revelation and Christian faith, his alleged objectivism and foundationalism, the weight given to the doctrine of the *homoousion* as well as *perichoresis* and concerns about modalistic tendencies that might blur the distinctions of the Divine Persons. While Molnar's discussions are brief, the defenses he succinctly mounts really point to whole chapters that precede the last one. Deddo concludes that while the objections are simply stated, the answers to which Molnar directs us are extensive.

Deddo concluded his presentation with a few questions focusing on the centrality of the doctrine of the Trinity and some implications of that for Torrance's theology. Molnar took these up during his response.

"Molnar on Torrance: The Future of Torrance's Theology"

Chris Kettler, Friends University

Chris Kettler began noting that Molnar did an admirable job presenting Torrance's theology for what it says rather than allowing his views to be shaped by what Torrance's critics think he is saying. He welcomed Molnar's refutation of Ronald Thiemann's mistaken view that Torrance was a foundationalist because for years readers followed Thiemann by erroneously assuming that Torrance based his view of revelation on an "intuitive experience". He said that Molnar put that criticism to rest by properly focusing on Torrance's doctrine of justification by faith and knowledge of God as it takes place within faith. He also noted that Molnar laid to rest criticisms that Torrance had no place for the historical Jesus in his thought by stressing that Torrance wanted to avoid any sort of dualistic separation of Christ's humanity and divinity since in his estimation the Gospel writers themselves were not interested in the details of Jesus' human life but in the fact that the Word was acting toward us in his human history. Molnar stressed that our humanity is taken seriously by Torrance because Christ's

humanity is crucial since we participate in his humanity through the Spirit.

Next, Kettler discussed the relation of the immanent and economic Trinity observing that while Torrance would want to avoid the mutual conditioning between God and creatures that crept into Rahner's theology, he also emphasized that there was no God behind the back of Jesus Christ. Hence, one could not separate the immanent from the economic Trinity even though it is also important to make a distinction so that the immanent Trinity is not collapsed into the economic Trinity as frequently happens in "anthropocentric theologies".

Kettler also discussed the differences between Torrance and Barth over the idea that there is for Barth an eternal obedience within the immanent Trinity and for Torrance this was a problematic notion. Kettler wondered whether or not one could maintain "a monarchial sense of the Father" in some fashion without falling into subordinationism. He suggested that perhaps Torrance's fears of subordinationism could be allayed by allowing Jesus Christ to define what we mean by God. Kettler noted that Torrance's theology always was and remained a missionary theology and was truly evangelical without being fundamentalist, so that he was not afraid to believe that God not only commands in Christ but also listens.

Kettler stressed how important it was for Torrance to accentuate the connection between Jesus Christ and God. Referring to those who asked Torrance "is God really like Jesus?" Kettler said that this question led Torrance to wonder what had gone wrong in Christian preaching and teaching that damaged people's faith in the relationship between Jesus Christ and God. Observing that many theologians today seemingly capitulate to the idea that Christianity and Islam affirm "the same doctrine of God" Kettler held that Torrance's emphasis on the cross as the source of the doctrine could provide theologians of this century with a "new and challenging accent". It was important for Torrance to stress that God was on the cross and that that indicated the nature of God's love so that if Jesus had been a mere man dying on the cross, Christianity would lose its real meaning since it would present us with a picture of God's lack of concern for humanity, or worse, his demand to be placated before loving us. Kettler then discussed Torrance's continued apophaticism which, in his view, occasionally came "dangerously close" to affirming a "God behind the back of Jesus Christ". While acknowledging that for Torrance God remains incomprehensible even in his revelation of his name to us, Kettler still wondered whether or not Torrance caused problems with his assertion that "What God ultimately is in the essence of his eternal being we cannot know, but we are given by God to know *who* he is". Does the essence we cannot know differ from the God who names himself? Perhaps the answer to these questions is to be found, as Kettler himself avers, in the fact that our understanding of God must be based on soteriology rather than logic.

In connection with the doctrine of creation Kettler maintained that an important contribution of Torrance for the future of theology will be his stress on the importance of the immanent Trinity and God's freedom in relation to creation while still emphasizing his interrelations with creation. He mentioned that Molnar has accentuated this in his book by following Torrance and asserting that the triune God is not constituted by his relations with us. While Torrance insisted that the immanent or ontological Trinity was evangelical in that God willed to and did and does relate graciously with us, and although he rejected mythological thinking about God, still Torrance held that we cannot know God in his "essence". This, once again, led Kettler to wonder whether or not this is an unresolved tension in Torrance's thought because if we cannot know God's essence, then perhaps that could mean that there was after all a God behind the back of Jesus—an idea Torrance firmly rejected with his belief in the evangelical Trinity.

Kettler then discussed the contrast between Moltmann and Torrance on the doctrine of creation presented by Molnar. The idea that creation from nothing refers to a "shrinkage process" in God's eternal being such that God is conditioned by creating the world is surely opposed to Torrance's view. In addition, Moltmann's idea that it is impossible to conceive of a non-creative God since God cannot find bliss in his eternal love is also problematic. Kettler said that Molnar was right to question such thinking. This led Kettler to wonder whether the doctrine of creation would become the new dividing line in theology, separating those who believe God can do something *new* as in creation and incarnation from those who think creation and incarnation are necessary for God. Kettler also discussed Molnar's critical questions concerning Torrance's new natural theology based on what Molnar perceived as a residue of the old natural theology embedded in some of Torrance's thinking. In this regard, Kettler thought it was appropriate to speak of the silent cry of the universe for God since unitary thinking supports Torrance's new natural theology.

Kettler concluded his presentation discussing eschatology, the church and the vicarious humanity of Christ. He thought one of the strengths of Molnar's book was to stress the implications of Torrance's teaching on the risen and ascended humanity of Christ for our humanity. Without Christ's bodily resurrection Torrance held we would not be truly human because our humanity is tied to the risen and ascended Lord himself who continues his high priestly mediation between us and the Father between the time of his resurrection and his second coming. This means that knowledge of God can only be attained by returning to the incarnate Word attested in scripture and not by attempting to transcend the world of

space and time. Yet, our theology must be marked by an "eschatological reserve" so that we cannot pretend to make the judgments of God himself. The importance of seeing that Christ continues to mediate between us and the Father in his vicarious humanity undermines not only Bultmann's thinking but closes the door to any other mediators or priests beside the one mediator. Kettler believes that Molnar rightly saw the importance of the vicarious humanity of Christ because he claimed that Jesus' humanity was not simply an instrument through which God worked out our salvation but was essential to the personal and vicarious nature of atonement. Jesus made our God-forsakenness his own so that reconciliation was not something external to the Person of the mediator. Hence, atonement had to be something more than merely forensic; it involved a "soteriological suspension of ethics" because salvation depended not on observing the law, according to which no one can die for another. The cross would have been immoral except for the fact that on the cross God himself acted in our place doing what the law requires (obeying God) instead of using the law to hide from the need to rely totally on God to be truly human. Kettler also noted that Molnar was right to emphasize the priority of union with Christ over justification in Torrance's thought. Justification cannot mean that we depend on our faith but rather that we depend on Jesus alone and not at all on ourselves. This thinking also applies to baptism so that we see our baptism included in Jesus' own baptism; this is opposed to Barth's "ethical" interpretation of our baptism as our ethical response to God's action in Christ; for it means that our baptism actually is a participation in Christ's own actions.

"Reflections on Paul Molnar's Thomas F. Torrance: Theologian of the Trinity"

Alan Torrance, University of St. Andrews

Torrance began saying this is a wonderful study that is extremely well-researched, thorough and insightful. Its theologically incisive nature could be seen in its "architectonic" design which selected and ordered the key themes in Torrance's Trinitarian theology in "a masterful way". Torrance thought Molnar's assessment of the critiques of T. F. Torrance by Dan Hardy, Colin Gunton and Ronald Thiemann was thoroughly convincing. Equally fair-minded in Torrance's view were Molnar's own very gentle criticisms of T. F. Torrance. If T. F. Torrance were still alive, Alan Torrance said he would be delighted with this volume. Thus, the main concern of Torrance's paper was to raise further questions that might be asked of T. F. Torrance and his approach.

After discussing some of the politics of New College at the University of Edinburgh and how this shaped its theological agenda during the years that T. F. Torrance taught there and beyond, Alan Torrance went on to note that his father James taught alongside his brother Thomas for seventeen years. Then, Alan Torrance noted that Molnar began his book accentuating the doctrine of the Trinity. For T. F. Torrance that doctrine was the ground and grammar of theology which actually allowed all our knowledge of God to terminate upon the objective reality of God. Thus, our thinking could not find its truth in itself but only in God as revealed and active in Christ and the Spirit. Alan Torrance said this was the very heart of what T. F. Torrance's theology was about.

Molnar immediately turned to T. F. Torrance's bête noir, that is, the dualism between the *kosmos noetos* and the *kosmos aisthetos*, what he also referred to as the Latin Heresy. There was a period in T. F. Torrance's writing Alan Torrance said when almost every article he wrote began by referring to this dualism. And there were good reasons for doing so. According to Alan Torrance, there has been a sustained tendency in the West towards a kind of "abstractive thinking" that fails to understand things in their internal relations and to interpret God by focusing on history and space and time. Alan Torrance said he fears that the present recovery of interest in Perfect being theology and classical arguments for divine simplicity in so-called conservative quarters risks becoming a case in point where we seek to interpret God by means of a kind of negative abstracting from our own experience of this world rather than interpreting God's being out of God's enacted engagement with the contingent order and the relations internal to the Godhead that are disclosed to us through this. Molnar's interpretation of T. F. Torrance's critique of Arianism, and the ongoing tendency of human creatures to engage in mythology that reposes in our own self-understanding is both pertinent and timely. When T. F. Torrance stressed the basic and critical importance of the two-fold *homoousion* (that is of the Son and of the Spirit) in faithful theological interpretation, he articulated the *sine qua non* of a theology that transcends the projection of our own confused ideas. Here we have the possibility of thinking that is *true*—the faithful and obedient expression of God's reconciling self-disclosure on his own terms.

Alan Torrance next considered an area of controversy vis-à-vis Molnar's interpretation of T. F. Torrance. According to Molnar, Torrance flirted with endorsing some form of reconstructed natural theology. Alan Torrance said that he thinks Molnar's arguments are correct and that T. F. Torrance's enthusiasms did take him further in the direction of natural theology than was consistent with his fundamental conviction that knowledge of God must be conceived in irreducibly Trinitarian terms. There are *grounds* to suggest that T. F. Torrance did float the possibility that the intelligibility of the natural order and its open-ended reference, do indeed direct us to recognize the rationality of God's involve-

ment in the natural order. This is certainly what he appears to suggest when he observes that "the combination of unpredictability and lawfulness in nature found in its capacity spontaneously to generate richer and more open-structured forms of order in the constantly expanding universe may be regarded as something like the signature of the Creator in the depths of contingent being" (95-96). That having been said, it could also be argued that Torrance is not suggesting that someone who had no knowledge of God through revelation could truthfully recognize the Creator's signature—he certainly couldn't recognize the One through whom and for whom all things were created! A defense of T. F. Torrance could be mounted to the effect that he is really suggesting that to the reconciled mind, the contingent order has a kind of semiotic function—as Calvin seems to suggest. For Calvin, however, and I suspect for T. F. Torrance also, the signs of the glory of God freely placed in creation (not necessarily as Thomists suggest) could indeed be recognized as testimonies to the goodness of the Creator but only if Adam had remained whole. The question for consideration is whether T. F. Torrance strays further than this. Clearly, there is an ongoing debate as to how much one can read into certain sections in T. F. Torrance. Alan Torrance said he suspected that T. F. Torrance's enthusiasm with the pure sciences led him to a mild inconsistency. Whatever the case, Torrance concluded that Molnar was surely correct in suggesting that T. F. Torrance would not have been happy with the direction which Alister McGrath has sought to go, in which he has commandeered T. F. Torrance to develop his own particular natural theological agenda. Alan Torrance said Molnar's lengthy footnote discussing this is right on target.

It is important to note that natural theology's key error is to avoid the real source of our knowledge of God, namely, God's own self-revelation in Jesus Christ through his Spirit. T. F. Torrance certainly wanted to oppose scientific naturalism and did find in Christian faith a way to make sense of the intelligibility of creation in a way that avoided such erroneous approaches. But his focus on certain types of science over others, Alan Torrance believes, may have been selective. For instance, T. F. Torrance focused on subatomic physics and thermodynamics but not on evolutionary biology which might have raised questions about what kind of people might count as worthwhile in light of evolution. For example, according to Herbert Simon, "altruism could be the result of limited rationality and docility both of which will be deselected in the evolutionary derby". This makes one wonder what kind of signature of the divine would then be seen in the cosmos, and points rather to the idea that only the reconciled mind can truly see the meaning of the universe in reality.

Alan Torrance went on to discuss developments in Philosophy suggesting that T. F. Torrance's reliance on Polanyi might have been supplemented by other developments, especially in the United States. Alan Torrance also raised some questions concerning T. F. Torrance's thinking about the relation of one's trinitarian theology to political action, especially in relation to some of the views held by his father James Torrance with respect to their personal discussions about how to deal with political issues related to apartheid in South Africa. Torrance closed his comments praising Molnar's book once again for focusing on the core of T. F. Torrance's theology as did Elmer Colyer before him.

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Book Announcements

Christopher R. J. Holmes, ***Ethics in the Presence of Christ***, (London/New York: T & T Clark International, 2012).

Meehyun Chung, ***Reis und Wasser: Eine feministische Theologie in Korea***, (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2012).

Adam J. Johnson, ***God's Being in Reconciliation: The Theological Basis of the Unity and Diversity of the Atonement in the Theology of Karl Barth***, T & T Clark Studies in Systematic Theology edited by John Webster, Ian A. McFarland and Ivor Davidson, (London/ New York: T & T Clark International, 2012).

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